

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-11 (canceled).

Claim 12 (new): A telephone interpretation assistance device comprising:
an interpretee headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by an interpretee is connected;
a conversation partner headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by a conversation partner is connected;
a telephone connection jack to which a telephone terminal for conducting a call with an interpreter is connected;
synthesis means for synthesizing a voice signal input from the interpretee headset connection jack and a voice signal input from the conversation partner headset connection jack, and outputting the result to the telephone connection jack;
detection means for detecting a selection signal for selecting any of the interpretee and the conversation partner from a voice signal input from the telephone connection jack; and
switching means for switching the output destination of a voice signal input from the telephone connection jack to one selected by the selection signal detected by the detection means from the interpretee headset connection jack and the conversation partner headset connection jack.

Claim 13 (new): The telephone interpretation assistance device according to claim 12, wherein the synthesis means multiplexes a voice of the interpretee and a voice of the conversation partner such that the interpreter can listen to the voices in right and left channels separately at the interpreter's telephone terminal.

Claim 14 (new): A telephone interpretation system for providing a telephone interpretation service by using the telephone interpretation assistance device according to claim 12, further comprising:

connecting means for connecting an interpretee terminal and an interpreter terminal; and

communication means for conducting voice communications between the terminals connected by the connecting means; wherein

the connecting means includes an interpreter registration table including at least the language types for interpreters to interpret and terminal numbers of the interpreters; and

the telephone interpretation system includes functions of:

accepting a call from the interpretee terminal;

acquiring the language type of the interpretee and the language type of the conversation partner from the interpretee terminal for which the call is accepted;

extracting the terminal number of an interpreter by referencing the interpreter registration table based on the language type of the interpretee and the language type of the conversation partner acquired; and

calling the interpreter terminal by using the extracted terminal number of the interpreter.

Claim 15 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 14, wherein the communication means includes functions of:

recording the voice from the interpretee terminal and the voice from the interpreter terminal; and

reproducing and transmitting the recorded voices by a request from the terminals.

Claim 16 (new): A telephone interpretation assistance device for conducting telephone interpretation with bidirectional simultaneous interpretation, comprising:

an interpretee-side telephone interpretation assistance device; and

an interpreter-side telephone interpretation assistance device; wherein

the interpretee-side telephone interpretation assistance device comprises:

an interpretee headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by an interpretee is connected;

a conversation partner headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by a conversation partner is connected;

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a telephone connection jack to which a telephone terminal for conducting a call with an interpreter is connected;

multiplexing means for multiplexing a voice signal input from the interpretee headset connection jack and a voice signal input from the conversation partner headset connection jack as a first channel and a second channel, respectively, and outputting the result to the telephone connection jack; and

demultiplexing means for demultiplexing a voice signal input from the telephone connection jack into the first channel and the second channel, and outputting the first and second channels to the interpretee headset connection jack and the conversation partner headset connection jack, respectively; and

the interpreter-side telephone interpretation assistance device comprises:

a first interpreter headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by a first interpreter who interprets the language of the conversation partner into the language of the interpretee is connected;

a second interpreter headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by a second interpreter who interprets the language of the interpretee into the language of the conversation partner is connected;

a telephone connection jack to which a telephone terminal for conducting a call with the interpretee is connected;

demultiplexing means for demultiplexing a voice signal input from the telephone connection jack into the first channel and the second channel, and outputting the first and second channels to the second interpreter headset connection jack and the first interpreter headset connection jack, respectively; and

multiplexing means for multiplexing a voice signal input from the first interpreter headset connection jack and a voice signal input from the second interpreter headset connection jack as the first channel and the second channel, respectively, and outputting the result to the telephone connection jack.

Claim 17 (new): A telephone interpretation system for providing a bidirectional telephone interpretation service by using an interpretee-side telephone interpretation assistance device comprising:

an interpretee headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by an interpretee is connected;

a conversation partner headset connection jack to which a headset to be used by a conversation partner is connected;

a telephone connection jack to which a telephone terminal for conducting a call with an interpreter is connected;

multiplexing means for multiplexing a voice signal input from the interpretee headset connection jack and a voice signal input from the conversation partner headset connection jack as a first channel and a second channel, respectively, and outputting the result to the telephone connection jack; and

demultiplexing means for demultiplexing a voice signal input from the telephone connection jack into the first channel and the second channel, and outputting the first and second channels to the interpretee headset connection jack and the conversation partner headset connection jack, respectively; wherein

the telephone interpretation system comprises:

connecting means for establishing connection among an interpretee terminal, a first interpreter terminal to be used by a first interpreter who interprets the language of the conversation partner into the language of the interpretee, and a second interpreter terminal to be used by a second interpreter who interprets the language of the interpretee into the language of the conversation partner; and

communication means for conducting voice communications among the terminals connected by the connecting means; and

the communication means includes a demultiplexing function of demultiplexing a voice signal from the interpretee terminal into the first channel and the second channel, and transmitting the first and second channels to the second interpreter terminal and the first interpreter terminal, respectively, and a multiplexing function of multiplexing a voice signal from the first interpreter terminal and a voice signal from the second interpreter terminal as the first channel and the second channel, respectively, and transmitting the result to the interpretee terminal.

Claim 18 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 17, wherein

the connecting means includes an interpreter registration table including at least the language types for interpreters to interpret and terminal numbers of the interpreters; and

the telephone interpretation system includes functions of:

accepting a call from the interpretee terminal;

acquiring the language type of the interpretee and the language type of the conversation partner from the interpretee terminal for which the call is accepted;

extracting the terminal number of the first interpreter by referencing the interpreter registration table based on the language type of the conversation partner and the language type of the interpretee acquired;

calling the first interpreter terminal by using the extracted terminal number of the first interpreter;

extracting the terminal number of the second interpreter by referencing the interpreter registration table based on the language type of the interpretee and the language type of the conversation partner acquired; and

calling the second interpreter terminal by using the extracted terminal number of the second interpreter.

Claim 19 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 17, wherein

the communication means includes functions of:

recording the voice from the interpretee terminal, the voice from the first interpreter terminal, and the voice from the second interpreter terminal; and

reproducing and transmitting the recorded voices by a request from the terminals.

Claim 20 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 14, wherein:

the interpreter registration table includes selection information for selecting interpreters; and

the connecting means includes functions of acquiring an interpreter selection condition from the interpretee terminal, and extracting the terminal number of an appropriate interpreter by referencing the interpreter registration table based on the interpreter selection condition acquired.

Claim 21 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 14, wherein:

the interpreter registration table includes availability flags for indicating whether or not the interpreters are available; and

the connecting means includes a function of extracting the terminal number of an available interpreter by referencing the availability flags in the interpreter registration table.

Claim 22 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 14, wherein:

the interpreter registration table includes a function of registering accounting information concerning the interpreters; and

the connecting means includes functions of measuring the time for the interpretee terminal to receive interpretation services, and calculating fees from the measured time and the accounting information registered in the interpreter registration table.

Claim 23 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 18, wherein:

the interpreter registration table includes selection information for selecting interpreters; and

the connecting means includes functions of acquiring an interpreter selection condition from the interpretee terminal, and extracting the terminal number of an appropriate interpreter by referencing the interpreter registration table based on the interpreter selection condition acquired.

Claim 24 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 18, wherein:

the interpreter registration table includes availability flags for indicating whether or not the interpreters are available; and

the connecting means includes a function of extracting the terminal number of an available interpreter by referencing the availability flags in the interpreter registration table.

Claim 25 (new): The telephone interpretation system according to claim 18, wherein:

the interpreter registration table includes a function of registering accounting information on the interpreters; and

the connecting means includes functions of measuring the time for the interpretee terminal to receive interpretation services, and calculating fees from the measured time and the accounting information registered in the interpreter registration table.